

Van der Beck Slave House
Piermont Road
Closter, Bergen County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

Van der Peck Slave House
Piermont Road
Closter, Bergen County, New Jersey

Owner: Marcellus Cole

Date of Erection: About 1700 (?)

Architect:

Builder: Hybert Blawvelt

Present Condition: Fair

Number of Stories: One and one-half

Materials of Construction: Foundation - fieldstone
laid in clay

Exterior walls - frame
construction, clapboards
of varying width

Interior walls - plaster,
beams exposed on first floor

Inside brick chimneys

Roof - pitch

Historical Data:

The Blauvelts (the modern spelling), one of the most numerous families in Bergen County, are descendants of Garret Hendricksen. Garret was born near Deventer, Holland in 1623 of well-to-do Dutch parents.

He came to America in 1644 married, lived and died in New Amsterdam. Most of his thirteen children adopted the name Blauvelt, which means "blue hills" from the hills around Deventer, Holland. Four of these children came to Bergen County; one was Hybert who joined in the Tappan patent in 1686. In 1689 he became a member of Tappan settlement in Harrington Township on Tappan Road, which is the present Piermont Road. His brother, Abraham, settled on the west side of the road. These two brothers were proprietors of the "Old Jug" tavern which was located on the corner of Tappan Avenue and Old Dock Road. It was a prosperous site on the main highway from the Old Dock House at the foot of the Palisades.

In 1806, the owner was Cornelia Blauvelt, a daughter of Abrams and his wife Elizabeth. She was living in "Old Jug" and the slave house was occupied by one "Irish Sally." In 1843 Cornelia married her third husband John Van der Beck. From that time on, the house was known as Van der Beck slave house.

In 1867 Daniel Cole, a descendant of the Blauvelts was the owner of the property. Upon his death, his son Marcellus became the owner. It is now occupied by tenants.

Originally, the first floor was one large room and above it was a small attic used as sleeping quarters. Additions and changes are of a later date.

Bibliography:

Harvey, C.B. Geneological History of Hudson and Bergen Counties, New Jersey New York Geneological Publishing Company, 1900

Information from the family Bible in the possession of Marcellus Cole, and information from older residents of the Neighborhood collected by Wallace Dunlop, Bergen County Historian

Walter C. Reid
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams
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